

Part V

Principle Three: Scientifically Based Research Programs

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A grant recipient's program shall be based on scientifically based research that provides evidence that the program to be used will reduce violence and illegal drug use.¹

Please check off your compliance with the following requirements:²

- ☒ Program activities are designed to meet goals and objectives
- ☒ Programs are selected and activities are designed to meet the needs identified in the needs assessment
- ☒ The programs and activities selected for funding (check at least one below):

Have demonstrated effectiveness

Show promise

Are self-developed based on best practice, and have an evaluation component to evaluate impact upon the target population

- ☒ Ongoing program review/assessment is in place

“Effective Programs” are research-based programs that have been demonstrated to be effective in preventing or reducing drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior, or in modifying behavior or attitudes demonstrated to be precursors or predictors or drug use or violence.²

Districts should take care that they implement the program in a manner that **FAITHFULLY REPLICATES** the program as it was **originally conceptualized, implemented, and tested**. Districts must evaluate these programs, locally, as part of their requirements under Principle Four: Assessment of Objective Data and Evaluation.³

“Promising Programs” are research-based programs that incorporate research-based strategies or approaches which have demonstrated that they reduce drug use or violent behavior or modify attitudes that are predictors of, or precursors to, drug use or violent behavior.³

To continue to give flexibility in selecting programs and to permit the implementation of locally developed programs that may be effective **but have not been rigorously evaluated** districts may choose to implement programs that show promise of being effective.³

Districts that choose to implement a **promising program**, at the end of no more than two years of implementation, must be prepared to demonstrate to the Office of Drug Control Policy that the program has been effective in preventing or reducing drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior, or in modifying behaviors or attitudes demonstrated to be precursors to, or predictors of drug use or violence. **At the end of the two year period, districts that cannot meet this test must select another program for implementation or discontinue funding the program with Title IV-SDFSCA funds.**

“Self developed programs” are locally – designed or developed programs which are based on best practice, incorporate effective strategies or approaches, **and** have an evaluation component to evaluate the impact on the target population.²

“Un-approved Activities” One-time or stand alone events, programs whose primary purpose is to provide recreational opportunities, programs whose sole purpose is to educate, or programs whose primary purpose is to provide alternative activities (unconnected to an effective or promising program).²

For example: assemblies for all students when the program is only designed for a specific group of students participating in the prevention program, drug-free dances, outdoor challenges which do not include a specific component related to changing attitudes and/or behaviors around ATOD and/or violence, programs whose primary purpose is to entertain and motivate.²

Please keep in mind that an approved program must be based on research or evaluation that shows evidence of prevention or reduction in ATOD use and/or violent or disruptive behavior. Activities alone to not constitute a program.²

Programs Based on Research -Required Elements-⁴

1. All nationally or locally designed Safe, Drug-Free Schools and Communities funded programs must be **based on research**.
2. All programs must measure their impact on student **attitudes or behaviors** in one or more of the following areas:
 - A. Alcohol or other drug use**
 - B. Violent Behaviors**
 - C. Disruptive Behaviors**
3. Programs may measure the following:
Predictors or the precursors for alcohol or other drug use, violent behaviors or disruptive behaviors.

Programs Based on Research Required Criteria for Selecting Nationally Recognized Programs³

1. Program was based on a theory of behavior or attitude change.
2. Program was conducted over several weeks or months to make changes in youth.
3. Program used quality sampling in the design of pilot projects
4. Program used high quality, relevant, statistically valid measurements of attitude or behavior change. Change in knowledge is an insufficient measurement. Programs need to measure risk behaviors or attitude toward risk behaviors.
5. Program used rigorous data collection and analysis methods.
6. Program design eliminated compounding variables.
7. Program design and implementation used control or comparison groups.
8. Pre and post measurements were used to determine the impact of the program.
9. Post measurements were conducted at least four weeks after the program.
10. Program demonstrated a sustained effort over a long period of time.
11. Program was suited for multiple site replication with diverse populations.
12. Programs need to provide new customers with the following:
 - A. Program objectives – clear, measurable objectives
 - B. Curriculum outline or guide for implementing activities
 - C. Research or evaluation results to support the program
 - D. Pre and post evaluation instruments – for use with new students

☑ Check-Off Sheet for Criteria for Effective Research Based Programs³

Target Population

Whom was the program designed to serve?

What age group and/or grade levels?

Primary grades – children, parents and teachers

Upper Elementary grades – parents, teachers and peers

Jr. High/Middle School – peers and role models

High School – individual identity, peers and role models

Is the targeted population similar to students in your own district?

What level of risk group does the program target?

Is the program for everyone? (i.e. as all 7th grade students, all K-12?)

Does the program target groups at risk, such as children of drug users, poor schools achievers, children from economically disadvantaged families?

Does the program target individuals who have been expelled, suspended, on probation, frequent runaways, school truants, delinquents, sexually active, sexually abused or who are teenage parents?

Program Core Elements

Program Structure – how the program is organized and constructed

Does the program provide multiple years of prevention or intervention?

How many sessions/modules are provided per year? (i.e. 10-15 sessions in year 1 and 8 booster sessions per year over the next 2-3 years)

How many booster sessions are provided for the following years?

Are detailed lesson plans provided? How many?

Are student materials provided?

Are the materials age-appropriate?

Are student assessment measures included?

Is there a standardized pre/post measure?

Is the pre/post measure age-appropriate?

Is the pre/post measure culture appropriate?

Is this a school-based prevention program?

Is this predominantly a curriculum-based prevention program?

Program Content – The information and/or education components of the program³

Does the Program teach skill-building techniques? These include:

General Self-Management Skills³

- Problem solving skills
- Decision making skills
- Coping strategies or skills
- Behavioral relaxation techniques
- Anger management
- Stress management
- Anxiety management
- Self control techniques (self-reinforcement, self-instruction, goal setting, principles of self-change)

General Social Competence³

- Interpersonal skills (initiating social interactions, complimenting, conversational skills)
- General assertive skills (making requests, saying no, expressing feelings and concerns)

Social Resistance Skills³

- Short and long term consequences of drug use
- Factual information about the actual levels of drug use among adults and adolescence
- Social stigma and physiological effects of cigarette smoking
- Media pressure to smoke, drink and use drugs
- Advertising techniques employed by tobacco and alcoholic beverage industries to promote the use of these drugs
- Skills on how to resist both media and peer pressure to use
- Teach students how to say no (focus on the content and delivery of the message)
- Are the techniques above age-appropriate?
- Are the techniques above culture-appropriate?

Does the program promote *pro-social bonding*? Pro-social bonding includes:

- Building attachments to schools or parents
- Building beliefs in the validity of laws and rules
- Building commitments to education and occupation
- Does the program promote positive peer influence?

Program Delivery – how the program is given to and received by the audience³

Does the program use interactive methods to teach skills?

- Group discussion
- Role-playing

Modeling
Instruction
Group Feedback
Extended practice (behavioral rehearsal)
Reinforcement

Does the program use other methods to teach skills?

Films, videos, computers
Speakers
One-on-one contact
Are the methods for this program age-appropriate?
Are the methods for this program culture-appropriate?
Does the training ensure that the curriculum will be delivered as to maintain program fidelity (accuracy of program details)?

Research Support for Program and/or Strategy³

Do the research findings show that the strategies used have been effective?

Has the program demonstrated reduced ATOD use?
Has the program demonstrated reduced violent behavior?
Has the program been shown to change attitudes toward not using ATOD?
Has the program demonstrated a change for attitudes against the use of violence?

Examples of research results as these appear in the literature:

Proportion of experimental group smoking declined by the end of treatment, whereas comparison group smoking did not decline
Less smoking behavior and fewer intentions to smoke for experimental subjects at the end of the 8th and 9th grades

Is the program based on a particular theory accepted by experts in the field?

Does the theory provide a logical explanation for why the program works?
Did the program produce the desired changes in the target population?

Was the research conducted by reputable researchers and published in a reputable journal?

Peer-reviewed journal
Referral journal

Did the study use a rigorous evaluation design?

Was an experimental vs. control group design using random assignment (experimental design) used?
Was experimental vs. control group not randomly assigned (quasi-experimental design) used?
Has the study been replicated at more than one site?
Have the results been duplicated?
Was the program implemented by school staff in the study?

Were the students in the study similar to students in the school district?
Is the program cost-effective?

Program Providers – the individuals who deliver the program³

Who delivers the program?

Peer leaders
Mentors
Teachers
Community prevention specialists
Outside (program) agency staff?
Law officers
Is the training offered for delivering the program the way in which it was intended to be delivered?
Does the training offer “booster” or continued support sessions to reinforce delivering the program as intended?

Applying Effective Strategies⁵

Traditionally, schools have been primarily responsible for developing and implementing curricula and instructional programs to address substance abuse, violence and many other problems young people face. While curriculum and instructional programs have been important and necessary, alone they are insufficient. To prevent or reduce rates of substance abuse and violent behavior among youth, school-based prevention should also be coordinated with broader environmental and other strategies that not only address change at the individual, classroom and school levels but also at the family, community and society levels – a combination of strategies that aim:

To involve families and communities in the design and delivery of substance abuse and violence prevention programs and ultimately encourage community and family ownership of these programs

To influence the larger social and legal context that shapes attitudes and beliefs regarding substance abuse and violence (e.g. educating the larger public, policy makers, and the media to gain understanding of and support for prevention initiatives)

To create or enforce existing laws and regulations designed to limit or prohibit substance abuse and violent behavior (e.g. enforcing age 21 drinking laws and holding parents, outlets and servers responsible for providing alcohol to those underage)

To provide alternatives to substance abuse and violence through social and recreational activities and mentoring

Such strategies demand that schools reach out to collaborate with families and other agencies, such as social service, youth protection, community police and recreational ventures to create prevention programs.

What is Meant by the Term “Effective”?⁵

An effective program is one that meets its objectives in terms of producing positive outcomes. That is, the program demonstrates effectiveness in:

- A. preventing or reducing substance abuse or violent and disruptive behavior
- B. changing the knowledge, attitudes or beliefs that lead to substance abuse and violent behavior
- C. promoting or strengthening behavior and skills, such as good interpersonal problem – solving skills, that are associated with the preventing substance abuse and violent behavior

Ideally, the program also demonstrated a sustained effect and produces positive outcomes that are generalizable to populations other than the ones with which it was needed.

Examples of Effective Programs⁵

The literature review revealed approximately 52 research-based programs described as effective in at least one evaluation of the research on prevention programs. The United States Department of Education and the Educational Development Center staff reviewed the program list and concluded, upon further investigation of the literature (i.e. individual program evaluations) that the program summaries to organized into categories of “effective” and “promising”. This is not an exhaustive list of programs. It is primarily a list created to provide a foundation for understanding and applying the *Principles of Effectiveness*.⁵

For this preliminary draft, a number of programs from the following list were selected to be summarized in a set of Program Fact Sheets. These fact sheets were developed with input from the New England SDFSC coordinators and officials at the United States Department of Education. Programs for which fact sheets have been developed are marked with an asterisk.⁵

Effective Programs: The following programs are research-based and have consistently produced positive results as reported in the literature on substance abuse, violence and disruptive behavior prevention.⁵

Across Ages
Adolescent Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids (ATLAS) Project
Anger Coping Intervention (Lochman)
BASIS
Big Brothers/Sisters of America
Bry’s Behavioral Monitoring and Reinforcement Program*
Bullying Prevention Program
Child Development Project (CDP)*
Effective Schools Project
Families and Schools Together (FAST)*
Focus on Families*
Growing Healthy*
Life Skills Training Program (LST)*
The Midwestern Prevention Project (MPP)*
Preparing for the Drug-Free Years*
Project Northland*
Project PATHE
Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)*
Quantum Opportunities
Reconnecting Youth (RC)*
Rotheram’s Social Skills Training (RSSST)*
Strengthening Families Program (SFP)*
Structural Family Therapy (SFT) Program for Hispanic Families*
Student Training through Urban Strategies (STATUS)

Weissburg's Social Competence Promotion Program (WSCPP)*
Young Negotiators

Research-Based Programs: Following programs can also be categorized as research-based. However, only certain aspects of the program have been shown to produce desired changes in knowledge, attitudes, practices and skills – as reported in individual journal articles and evaluations of the research on prevention programs.⁵

Adolescent Alcohol Prevention Trial (AAPT)*
Adolescent Transitions Program (ATP)*
Alcohol Misuse Prevention Program
CHOICE Intervention
Here's Looking at You, Two and 2000
I'm Special*
Nebraska Network of Drug-Free Youth Program
Project ALERT*
Project CARE
Project SMART/SMART Leaders
Project Success
School Transitional Environment Project (STEP)
Seattle Social Development Project*
Teenage Health Teaching Modules

Promising Programs: The following programs are promising. They have been recognized publicly and have appeared in a professional journal or publication. However, they have not been fully evaluated and/or evaluation results are pending.⁵

Effective Behavior Support (EBS)*
First Step to Success*
Lane School Program*
Multimodel School-Based Prevention Demonstration
PeaceBuilders*
Positive Adolescent Choices Training (PACT)
Project ACHIEVE*
The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP)*
Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum*
Society-Based programs, including: community policing, public service announcements, warning of dangers of drug use and other risk taking behaviors; drug supply interdiction to increase retail drug (i.e. tobacco) prices and increased taxes on alcohol and tobacco
Westerly Public Schools Program Systemwide Efforts in Westerly, Rhode Island

Other examples of drug and violence prevention programs, strategies and approaches that have been demonstrated that they can be effective in preventing or reducing drug use, violence or disruptive behavior.

Drug Prevention Programs and Strategies/Approaches²

- Adolescent Alcohol Prevention Trial Program
- Alcohol Misuse Prevention Project
- The Alert Drug Prevention Curriculum
- D.A.R.E.
- The Life Skills Training (LST) Program
- Midwestern Prevention Program
- Project Northland
- Project SMART
- Project STAR
- Project STRIDE
- Seattle Social Development Project

Parent Programs and Strategies/Approaches²

- Adolescent Transition Program (ATP)
- Focus on Families
- Preparing for the Drug-Free years
- Project Family
- Strengthening Families Program

Violence Prevention Programs and Strategies/Approaches²

- Big Brothers/Sisters of America
- The Buddy System
- Character Counts
- Gang Prevention Curricula
- Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT)
- The Intervention Campaign Against Bully/Victims Problems
- Juvenile Mentoring Program
- The Montreal Longitudinal Study of Disruptive Boys
- PeaceBuilders
- Peaceful Solutions Peer Mediation Training Program
- The Peer Mediation Program
- Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)
- Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP)
- Richmond Youth Violence Prevention Program
- Teaching Students to be Peacemakers

General/Other Programs and Strategies/Approaches²

- The Child Development Project
- Growing Healthy: School Health Curriculum Project
- The Improving Social Awareness-Social Problem Solving Project
- Know Your Body
- Michigan Model
- The Perry Preschool Project

**The Positive Youth Development Program
Reconnecting Youth Program
The Social Relations Intervention Program
Teenage Health Teaching Modules**

☑ Key Elements of Promising Violence Prevention Programs⁶

- ☐ Activities designed to foster norms against violence, aggression and bullying.
- ☐ Skills training based on a strong theoretical foundation.
- ☐ A comprehensive, multifaceted approach, including family, peer, media and community.
- ☐ Physical and administrative changes to promote a positive schools climate.
- ☐ At least 10-20 booster sessions during the first year of a well organized, well implemented program and 5-10 booster sessions in the succeeding two years.
- ☐ Interactive teaching, including group work, cooperative learning, discussions and role-plays that allow students to practice social skills.
- ☐ Developmentally tailored interventions which recognize that risk factors for violent behavior appear to be age and stage specific.
- ☐ Culturally sensitive material appropriate to the racial, ethnic and demographic characteristics of highly diverse student populations.
- ☐ Teacher training to ensure that programs will be implemented as intended by the program developers.

☑ Key Elements of Effective Drug Prevention Curricula⁷

- ☐ Helps students recognize internal pressures, like anxiety and stress, and external pressures, like peer attitudes and advertising that influence them to use alcohol and other drugs
- ☐ Develops personal, social and refusal skills to resist those pressures
- ☐ Teaches that using drugs, alcohol and tobacco are not the norm among teenagers, even if students think that “everyone is doing it” (Research suggest this is normative education is essential in prevention.)
- ☐ Provides developmentally appropriate material and activities, including information about the short-term effects and long-term consequences of alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- ☐ Uses interactive teaching techniques, such as role plays, discussion, brainstorming and cooperative learning
- ☐ Covers necessary prevention elements in at least ten sessions a year (with a minimum of three to five booster sessions in two succeeding years)
- ☐ Actively involves the family and the community
- ☐ Includes teacher training and support
- ☐ Contains material that is easy for teacher to implement and culturally relevant for students

☒ Violence Prevention Components of Dubious Value or Possible Harm⁶

- ☐ Scare tactics that show pictures or videos containing violent scenes
- ☐ Adding a violence prevention programs to a school that is already overwhelmed
- ☐ Segregating aggressive or anti-social students into a separate group establishes a negative peer group and can be counterproductive
- ☐ Instructional programs that are too brief and not supported by a positive school administration
- ☐ Programs that focus exclusively on self-esteem
- ☐ Programs providing only dialectic information without helping students develop skill necessary to avoid and handle conflict

☒ What Does Not Work in Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Prevention of Violence⁸

- ☐ Information-only programs about negative effects of drugs
- ☐ Programs that focus only on increasing self-esteem
- ☐ Scare tactics
- ☐ Testimonies of ex-addicts
- ☐ Holding students back from promotion to the next grade
- ☐ Pre-packaged curricula used in isolation
- ☐ One-shot programs such as assemblies
- ☐ Mentoring relationships that do not include reinforcement of appropriate behavior
- ☐ Citizen patrols
- ☐ Peer counseling
- ☐ Youth employment and vocational training programs *without an intensive educational component*

Source Citations for Principle Three: Scientifically Based Research Programs

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6. *Safe Schools, Safe Students – A Guide to Violence Prevention Strategies* (adapted)
7. *Making the Grade: A Guide To School Drug Prevention Programs* (adapted)
8. *Developing Safe and Healthy Kids*. California Department of Education, 1998.